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Editorial: Different Cultures in Education for Democracy and Citizenship

This volume of the *Journal of Social Science Education* could be another example for what is being observed as the current renaissance of comparative studies that seek to overcome the traditional approaches called “Comparative Education.” The task is to develop new conceptual frameworks that allow going beyond merely inter-national education systems and to acknowledge the development of an educational *world* culture (world polity, global institutionalisation of education, Meyer, Ramirez 2012; cf. Schriewer 2007; Kennedy 2011). Taking this into account, the *JSSE* should include teaching and learning cultures in subject matter didactics. Thus, the comparative study of citizenship education and social studies can be established as an integral part of cultural studies, mirroring society through the lenses of teachers and students. As Schubert (2009, 159) points out: “Since pedagogy in a traditional understanding – does not only deal with teaching and reforming culture, and can itself be only understood as part of a culture and a cultural tradition, it is almost self-evident to grasp pedagogy as cultural studies ... And since talking about culture – from a current perspective – has to inevitably assume its plurality and therefore has to include comparative elements of different cultures, it seems to be almost mandatory to speak about *comparative* cultural studies.”¹ This issue of the *JSSE* deals with different impact factors on such educational cultures in the subject fields of civics and social studies: academic disciplines and their dominant paradigms, school culture, the hidden power of curriculum or the influences of migrational biographies on teaching culture. The contributions cover different regions such as China, Japan, Finland or the two Germanies.

The essay by *Silja Graupe* (Alanus Maurus University, Bonn, Germany) reflects a dominant disciplinary culture, which has a powerful global influence on school lessons via academic teacher training: the academic teaching of the standard paradigm of economics and its inherent images of man. Her essay is an exercise in thought style (“Denkstile”) with reference to the Polish historian of science, Ludwik Fleck. The thesis of the essay is that the human image underlying the economic curriculum differentiates society into mere cogs in the machine of the economy, on the one side, and omnipotent social engineers, on the other.

Matti Rautiainen and *Pekka Räihä* (Jyväskylä University, Finland) deconstruct our image of an exemplary educational culture, namely the high score PISA winner Finland. Focusing the democratic deficit and the passivizing tradition in Finnish educational culture, education for democracy seems to

¹ Originally, the quotation is in German language: „Da Pädagogik – in einem durchaus traditionellen Verständnis – nicht nur mit Vermittlung und Erneuerung von Kultur befasst ist, sondern auch selbst nur als Teil einer Kultur und einer Kulturtradition begriffen werden kann, liegt es nahe, sie als Kulturwissenschaft zu verstehen (vergleiche Mollenhauer 1983...). Und da die Rede von Kultur – zumindest heute – notwendig von deren Pluralität auszugehen hat und damit Elemente des Vergleichs verschiedener Kulturen einschließt, erscheint es fast schon zwingend von *vergleichender* Kulturwissenschaft zu sprechen“ (Schubert 2009, 159, translation TG).

be a “paper promise” especially when compared with its neighbour Sweden. They report on a project on Critical Integrative Teacher Education (CITE) which leads a way out of the two different sides of Finnish school culture. It establishes investigative communities of teacher students who learn participation to be a way of life in their professionalisation process. In addition, the reader gains a lot of inside information on current Finnish school culture.

Is heterogeneity a challenge that may lead to a need for revising teacher education programmes and turn them into thorough diversity-oriented programmes for the social studies domain? *Andrea Szukala* (Bielefeld University, Germany) deals with this question of diversity management in teacher recruitment for civics which leads to a mismatch in social studies teacher-learner relations. In her research, she uses exploratory biographical narratives with two young teachers named Lukas and Gökhan. “How I became a social studies teacher student?” - the identity construction of the narrative becomes obvious. The narrative analysis helps to identify some basic fields of future concern. A similar discussion in a European context can be found in the EDUMIGROM country profiles (Szalai 2011 and www.edumigrom.eu).

Norio Ikeno (Hiroshima University, Japan) focuses on the curriculum cultures within social studies and how they have been organised since World War II (for a global perspective, compare Su-Ying 1991; Rauer 1998; Schriewer 2007): Is citizenship education the aim of social studies as a school subject? This question is taken up in a selected review on Japan.

The transformation of a “socialist democracy” – as the dictatorship of the political party (SED) in the former German Democratic Republic identified itself – into a Western parliamentary system has been a difficult task because no blueprints existed. The educational narrative “The Chestnut Case” is situated in the difficult transitional process from a participatory dictatorship to a participatory democratic civil culture after 1989. The teacher *Ingo Lokies* (Weimar, Saalfeld, Germany) describes a “personal experience” and “almost coincidental situation of actuality” which started with a single action to rescue a tree and ended up in a broad campaign for environmental protection in the community. The commentary by *Julia Sammoray* and *Christian Welniak* (both Hamburg University, Germany) contextualises the historical circumstances and documents the scholarly controversies that arose around this award winning project in democracy learning. This case report continues the series of outstanding curriculum narratives in German civics education which started in [JSSE 2010-3](#) with the concept of categorical conflict didactics as the core paradigm of German civics education (How to deal with party politics at school?). It was followed up in [JSSE 2011-1](#) with a case about political education in the former GDR (The fox and the grapes) and in [JSSE 2011-2](#) with a case from the Weimar Republic (Pedagogy of the League of Nations). The final contributions in this series will include different practices during the Nazi dictatorship (1933-1945) and the pedagogy of the so-called 1968 movement (forthcoming). All together, the cases in this series hopefully provide study material rich in content for courses in comparative education or in German studies departments. The JSSE is very interested in classical curriculum narratives and lesson reports from other countries and educational cultures worldwide. A professional discussion about social sciences education is

dependent not only on empirical data but also on historical consciousness and shared narratives, which are continuously reflected theoretically.

This issue's country profile takes the reader back in the challenging history of a no longer existing nation-state: the former German Democratic Republic (GDR 1949-1989). "Staatsbürgerkunde," translated as "civics courses," is supposed to be a core element in the young generation's ideological infiltration by Marxism-Leninism and Scientific Communism. Various layers of documents and perspectives show a more sceptical view: Staatsbürgerkunde might have created internal contradictions that turned civics into an "impossible" course. This case study sums up various research conducted by *Benita Blessing* (Amherst, University of Massachusetts, USA and University of Vienna, Austria), *Henning Schluss* (University of Vienna, Austria) and *Tilman Grammes* (University of Hamburg, Germany). It should serve as a model to reconstruct the contradictory practices and the controversial views on ideological education, not only in other post-communist European countries (cf. the two issues on "Transformation and Citizenship Education": [JSSE 2-2007](#) and [JSSE 1-2008](#), Georgi Dimitrov and Elena Stoykova in [JSSE 4-2009](#), Albena Hranova in [JSSE 1-2011](#), Georgi Dimitrov in [JSSE 4-2011](#) and Tit Neubauer in [JSSE 1-2012](#)).

The film review by *Liu Changqing* (East China University of Political Science and Law, Shanghai/China) introduces an expressive so-called educational documentary (Yijing 2011). The film "*Vote for me!*" was produced in China as part of an international film project titled "*Why democracy?*" Within this documentary project, 17 thought-provoking short films deal with personal, political and legal issues around the theme "What does democracy mean to me?" In a groundbreaking collaboration, "*Why democracy?*" teamed up with Metro Newspapers worldwide to ask various people – from political leaders to athletes, from celebrities to religious figures – ten questions about democracy. The answers appear online, in the press and in a collection of short films (<http://www.whymdemocracy.net/>). The Chinese contribution "*Vote for me!*" is not only about the election of a so-called "class monitor" in a Chinese Middle School but also provides insights into Chinese grassroots democracy (cf. Osler 2011). The film confronts the international reader/viewer with a question that challenges the epistemological framework of citizenship education: the question whether democracy is a universal value that fits human nature or – on the other hand – whether elections inevitably lead to manipulation.

The selected review on citizenship education and social studies in Japan focuses on an educational culture which has been constantly monitored by comparative educational researchers from the inside as well as from the outside. Often, Japan is referred to as a "learning society" where not only schools but also society as a whole are regarded as micro-communities of learning. Meanwhile, Japan has become a multicultural society and the construct of "Japaneseness" is no longer self-evident. Doing comparative education in a cultural sensitive way means re-imagining the images, i.e. the stereotypes of the Self and the Others. In this context, Japanese scholars carefully reflect on the problem of translation, which often remains underestimated in comparative education. "Why I am writing in English and what is the value in doing so?" – this is the thoughtful question of Kariya (2011, 281), a scholar teaching at Oxford as well as in Tokyo. "In fact, hundreds of books and thousands of journal articles on education, both

academic and popular, are published in Japanese annually ... All of this work is 'locked' in Japanese, owing to a highly developed publishing industry, self-sufficient universities, and 'outward-looking' educational researchers and journalists ... Needless to say, little attention is paid to books on Japanese education written in 'foreign' languages" (Kariya 2011, 281). Imai, another scholar, reflects on the "risk of reducing cultural plurality in educational studies and thus standardizing thinking about education... Publishing in English can be considered as a contribution to a forum where the different semantics of education interact and respect one another, in the hope that together they are exploring the whole domain" (Imai 2010, 2, with a striking example from a PISA task).

Culturally sensitive comparative educational research in the subject of social studies still remains a challenging and time consuming project (for an impressive documentation in the field of history education, see Erdmann, Hasberg et al. 2011; Georgi 2008). The *JSSE* will continue to address this task and is preparing a further issue using visual analysis, educational documentary, practised lesson plans and other qualitative material (*JSSE* 2013-4). Contributions are very welcome!

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